

**CIHM
Microfiche
Series
(Monographs)**

**ICMH
Collection de
microfiches
(monographies)**



Canadian Institute for Historical Microreproductions / Institut canadien de microreproductions historiques

© 1998

Technical and Bibliographic Notes / Notes techniques et bibliographiques

The Institute has attempted to obtain the best original copy available for filming. Features of this copy which may be bibliographically unique, which may alter any of the images in the reproduction, or which may significantly change the usual method of filming are checked below.

- Coloured covers / Couverture de couleur
- Covers damaged / Couverture endommagée
- Covers restored and/or laminated / Couverture restaurée et/ou pelliculée
- Cover title missing / Le titre de couverture manque
- Coloured maps / Cartes géographiques en couleur
- Coloured ink (i.e. other than blue or black) / Encre de couleur (i.e. autre que bleue ou noire)
- Coloured plates and/or illustrations / Planches et/ou illustrations en couleur
- Bound with other material / Relié avec d'autres documents
- Only edition available / Seule édition disponible
- Tight binding may cause shadows or distortion along interior margin / La reliure serrée peut causer de l'ombre ou de la distorsion le long de la marge intérieure.
- Blank leaves added during restorations may appear within the text. Whenever possible, these have been omitted from filming / Il se peut que certaines pages blanches ajoutées lors d'une restauration apparaissent dans le texte, mais, lorsque cela était possible, ces pages n'ont pas été filmées.
- Additional comments / Commentaires supplémentaires:

L'Institut a microfilmé le meilleur exemplaire qu'il lui a été possible de se procurer. Les détails de cet exemplaire qui sont peut-être uniques du point de vue bibliographique, qui peuvent modifier une image reproduite, ou qui peuvent exiger une modification dans la méthode normale de filmage sont indiqués ci-dessous.

- Coloured pages / Pages de couleur
- Pages damaged / Pages endommagées
- Pages restored and/or laminated / Pages restaurées et/ou pelliculées
- Pages discoloured, stained or foxed / Pages décolorées, tachetées ou piquées
- Pages detached / Pages détachées
- Showthrough / Transparence
- Quality of print varies / Qualité inégale de l'impression
- Includes supplementary material / Comprend du matériel supplémentaire
- Pages wholly or partially obscured by errata slips, tissues, etc., have been refilmed to ensure the best possible image / Les pages totalement ou partiellement obscurcies par un feuillet d'errata, une pelure, etc., ont été filmées à nouveau de façon à obtenir la meilleure image possible.
- Opposing pages with varying colouration or discolourations are filmed twice to ensure the best possible image / Les pages s'opposant ayant des colorations variables ou des décolorations sont filmées deux fois afin d'obtenir la meilleure image possible.

This item is filmed at the reduction ratio checked below /
Ce document est filmé au taux de réduction indiqué ci-dessous.

	10x		14x		18x		22x		26x		30x	
				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>								
	12x		16x		20x		24x		28x		32x	

The copy filmed here has been reproduced thanks to the generosity of:

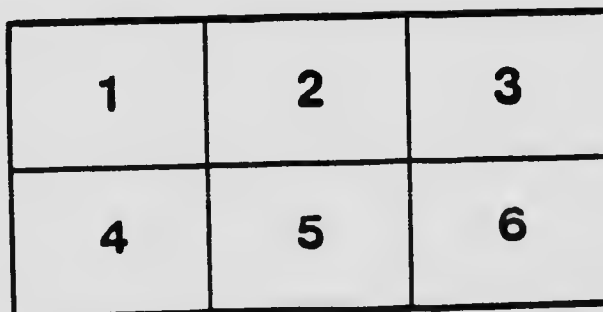
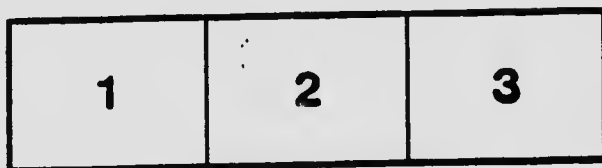
Special Collections Division
University of British Columbia Library

The images appearing here are the best quality possible considering the condition and legibility of the original copy and in keeping with the filming contract specifications.

Original copies in printed paper covers are filmed beginning with the front cover and ending on the last page with a printed or illustrated impression, or the back cover when appropriate. All other original copies are filmed beginning on the first page with a printed or illustrated impression, and ending on the last page with a printed or illustrated impression.

The last recorded frame on each microfiche shall contain the symbol \rightarrow (meaning "CONTINUED"), or the symbol ∇ (meaning "END"), whichever applies.

Maps, plates, charts, etc., may be filmed at different reduction ratios. Those too large to be entirely included in one exposure are filmed beginning in the upper left hand corner, left to right and top to bottom, as many frames as required. The following diagrams illustrate the method:



L'exemplaire filmé fut reproduit grâce à la générosité de:

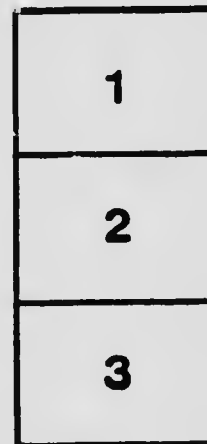
Special Collections Division
University of British Columbia Library

Les images suivantes ont été reproduites avec le plus grand soin, compte tenu de la condition et de la netteté de l'exemplaire filmé, et en conformité avec les conditions du contrat de filmage.

Les exemplaires originaux dont la couverture en papier est imprimée sont filmés en commençant par le premier plat et en terminant soit par la dernière page qui comporte une empreinte d'impression ou d'illustration, soit par le second plat, selon le cas. Tous les autres exemplaires originaux sont filmés en commençant par la première page qui comporte une empreinte d'impression ou d'illustration et en terminant par la dernière page qui comporte une telle empreinte.

Un des symboles suivants apparaîtra sur la dernière image de chaque microfiche, selon le cas: le symbole \rightarrow signifie "A SUIVRE", le symbole ∇ signifie "FIN".

Les cartes, planches, tableaux, etc., peuvent être filmés à des taux de réduction différents. Lorsque le document est trop grand pour être reproduit en un seul cliché, il est filmé à partir de l'angle supérieur gauche, de gauche à droite, et de haut en bas, en prenant le nombre d'images nécessaire. Les diagrammes suivants illustrent la méthode.



MICROCOPY RESOLUTION TEST CHART

(ANSI and ISO TEST CHART No. 2)



5.0

5.6

6.3

7.1

8.0

9.0

10

11.2

12.5

14

16

18

20

22.5

25

28

31.5

36

40

45

50

56

63

71

80



APPLIED IMAGE Inc

1653 East Main Street
Rochester, New York 14609 USA
(716) 482 - 0300 - Phone
(716) 288 - 5989 - Fax

TALKS WITH PARENTS

BY

D. V. PHALEN



PUBLISHED BY

La Belle Stationery and Church Supply House

609 RICHARDS ST., VANCOUVER, B.C.

THE LIBRARY



THE UNIVERSITY OF
BRITISH COLUMBIA

100

TALKS WITH PARENTS

BY

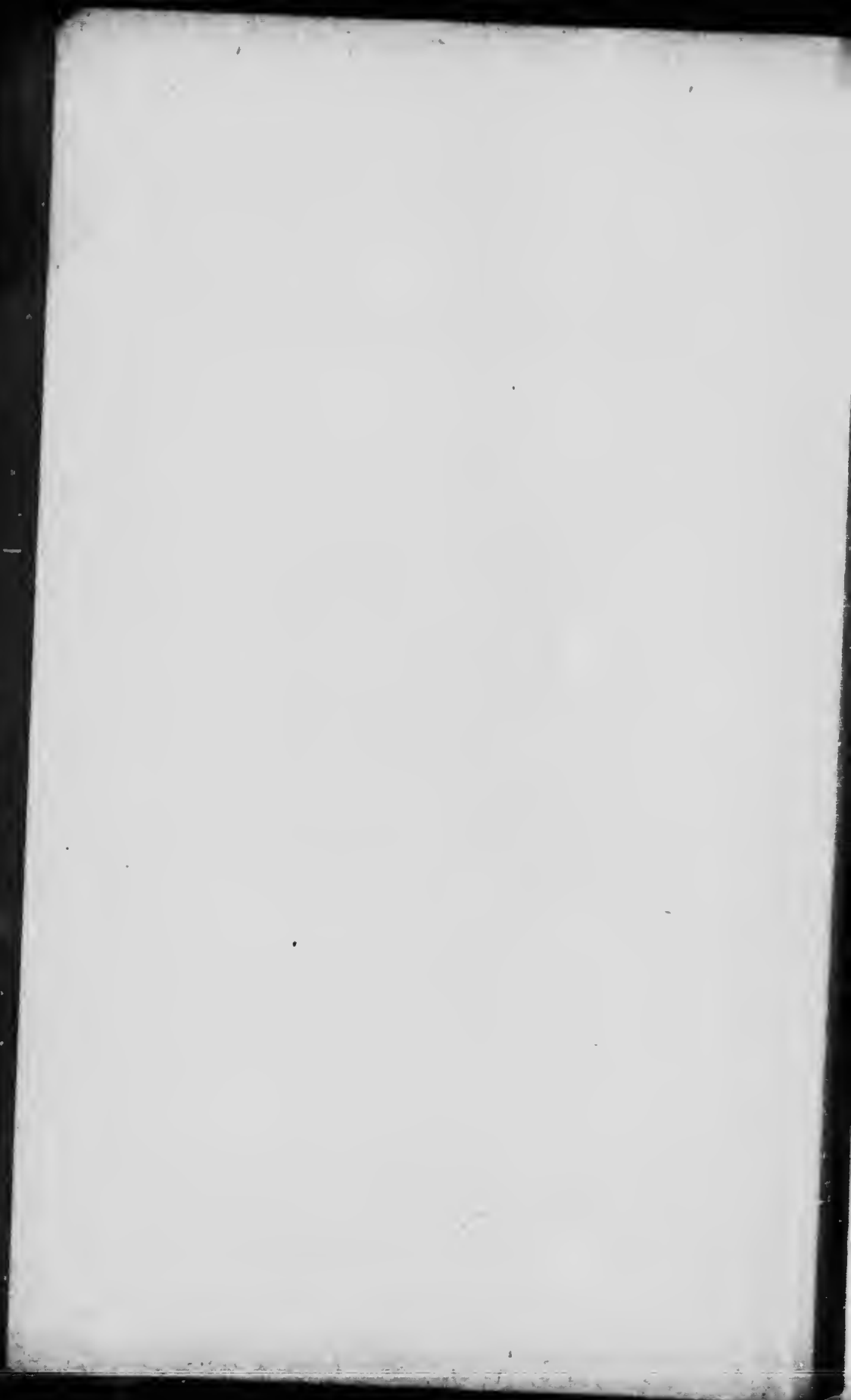
REV. D. V. PHALEN

"Whosoever shall scandalize one of these little
believe in Me, it were better for him if a
were hanged about his neck and he were
cast into the sea."

VANCOUVER, B. C.

LA BELLE STATIONERY AND CHURCH SUPPLY HOUSE

1910



FOREWORD

These Talks with Parents were first published by the late Father Phalen when he was editor of the Antigonish Casket. They have been found so helpful by thousands of parents in the East that I cordially commend them to parents in the West. The number of Talks was originally seven. The eighth and the ninth are added from the writings of other authors as developments of ideas suggested in the previous Talks.

+ N. McNEIL.
Archbishop of Vancouver

FIRST TALK

Providing for Family

The *direct* purpose of the Fourth Commandment is to lay down the duties of children to their parents. But *indirectly* we must understand from it that parents have duties to their children. These duties are divided into two classes. The first class has to do with the bodily and civil education of the child, to fit it for its position in the present life; the second class has to do with the moral and religious education of the child, to fit it for its position in the life to come.

The duty of providing for offspring until they are able to provide for themselves is dictated by nature itself, and even the brutes fulfil it. Yet there are in the world fathers so unnatural that they think only of themselves. They deny nothing to themselves; they satisfy all their desires; and they leave their children hungry and half-naked. Such a horrible state of affairs does not often exist in a community like ours. Nevertheless, it may be that there are fathers in these provinces who spend in folly or in sin the money that should be used to buy what is necessary for their children. And there are children staying away from school, from catechism, from Mass on Sunday, because they haven't clothes or shoes which squandered earnings would provide them.

Many a head of a family is saying to-day that he does his best, but that he cannot keep his children clad or shod. Before he was

married, however, he was wasting the money which he should have been saving up with a view to getting married. He is reaping now the wild oats which he has sown. Still worse is the case of those parents who, through idleness and lazy habits, have become unable to provide for the wants of their family.

The duty of providing for your children imposes on you also the obligation of preserving them as far as you are able from all that can injure their bodily health.

Many children grow up weak and sickly because their parents have not taken proper care of them, have not given them proper food, or perhaps even have ill-used them. But while taking proper care of their bodily health, you should not go to the other extreme and be over-anxious and over-careful about them. For in this way you are likely to make them grow up soft, delicate, unable to endure any hardships, unable or unwilling to work. And your children should be brought up to habits of industry; they should be taught from early years that they must not be idle; that idlers are of no use to themselves or to any one else. Even if you were rich, you should still bring your children up to some employment, for "man is born to labour." Queen Victoria had every one of her children learn a trade; the King has worn shoes made with his own hand.

A Good Education and Habits of Industry.

Going to school should be the chief employment of children up to the age of fourteen or fifteen. But during the hours which remain after school, they should be taught to make themselves useful around the house. It is a great shame to see women who are splendid house-keepers, with daughters who know nothing at all about house-keeping. These women know

how to do things so well themselves, and are so anxious to have them done well, that they cannot bear to have their daughters making experiments, which in the beginning, of course, means a good many mistakes and a good many failures. Again there are foolish mothers who will wear their fingers to the bone that their daughters may have soft white hands.

The Czarina of Russia is the daughter of a poor German duke. When she was a girl at home, she and her sisters were kept respectably dressed only because her mother, the Princess Alice of England, cut, made, turned out and repaired their garments with her own royal hands. Queen Victoria had taken care that all her daughters should learn to use the needle. This is something which every mother should teach her daughters, if she knows it herself; if not, she ought to get some one else to teach it to them.

Mothers are committing a very grave mistake, and worse than a mistake, when they do not teach their daughters all that they know themselves about housekeeping. A girl that is a perfect mistress of plain cooking and plain sewing is far better equipped to be mistress of her own house than if she could play two or three instruments and sing in two or three languages. But first of all, in the natural order, parents should teach their boys and girls habits of cleanliness, order, neatness and carefulness. This means that you should be cleanly, orderly, neat and careful yourselves, and then that you should bid your children to follow your example.

It is your duty to provide for your children; and you cannot provide for them as you should, unless you keep your affairs in order and

Practice Economy in your Expenditure.

Those parents, then, are guilty, who through their wasteful and improvident habits, do not keep their expenses in proper proportion to their earnings, so as to be able to lay something by for a rainy day. Those parents are guilty who neglect their work and thereby make their families suffer. But much more guilty are those who spend what they earn in foolish or in sinful amusement, and, instead of supporting their families, burden them with debt.

This means, of course, that parents must lead a life of sacrifice for the sake of their children, and must deny themselves a great many things which it would be lawful for them to have if they were unmarried. But when they were getting married they knew the obligations which they were assuming; they undertook the burden willingly; and now they should cheerfully bear it.

All this has reference merely to the bodily education of your children, the education which will fit them for the position they are to fill in this life.

The Choice of a State of Life,

however, must be made by themselves. You may advise them; and it is their duty to listen to your advice with all respect. But you have no authority to tell them, for instance, that they must get married, or remain single; that they must or must not enter the priesthood or the convent. If you tell them this they are not bound to obey you. When they enter into a certain state of life, it is they, not you, who will have to bear the burdens of that state; therefore, it is they, not you, who must choose the state whose burdens they have to bear.

You have no right to command in this matter.

But you have a right to direct and guide your children in a choice of a state of life, and you should do so. If you watch them closely, you will know their abilities sooner than they will themselves; you will even know their likes and dislikes before they have realized them themselves. You may be able to suspect what are the designs of God in regard to them; and then it will be your duty to do all in your power to help them realize these designs. As soon as they express any inclination for a certain state of life, you should examine this inclination for them, and try to find out their reasons for wishing to enter that state, showing them the obligations, the consequence, the dangers, of the course they wish to take. If you know that the choice is a bad one in itself, or that your children are not fit for the position they are inclined to choose, it is your duty to do all in your power to persuade them not to make this choice. You cannot command in this matter, but it is your duty to advise; and if through want of your advice and direction your children make a bad choice, God will not hold you guiltless.

SECOND TALK

About Training Children

There are comparatively few parents who do not pay attention to the bodily welfare of their children; but there is a vast number who pay little or no

Attention to their Spiritual Welfare.

Yet this is the all-important thing. So long as God leaves your children with you, they are only a deposit in trust; He commits them for a while to your care, so that, as you were the

instruments in His hand of bringing them into this world, so you may also be the instruments of bringing them to eternal happiness.

He Instituted the Sacrament of Matrimony

“to enable the husband and wife to live happily together and to bring up their children in the fear and love of God.” Our Lord made Christian marriage for life, that the parents always living together might constantly work together in the Christian education of their children.

If your children do not succeed in this world; if they are not distinguished by talent, by riches, by dignity: this makes no difference, provided that in the end they save their souls. And the salvation of their souls depends to a very great extent on the

Christian Education

which you give them. In order to give them this education, you must *instruct* them, *watch* over them, *correct* them, give them good *example*.

“Hast thou children?” says the Holy Ghost. “Instruct them and bow down their neck from their childhood.” This instruction is given by teaching them the principles of Christianity and training them to habits of piety. In the first place you must teach them the Lord’s Prayer, the Hail Mary, the Apostles’ Creed, the Ten Commandments, explaining these in a manner which suits their age. To make them learn these by heart without giving them any explanation, is like giving hard bread to a child that has not yet cut its teeth. According as their minds develop, you must explain to them as best you can, the

Fundamental Truths of Religion.

Let them know that God created them to know Him, love Him, and serve Him; that they are to remain here only for a time; that there is

another life, a happy one or an unhappy one, which is to last forever. Tell them about the soul that is in them; that, though they cannot see it, it is far more precious than the body which they can see. Tell them about the state that soul was in when they were born; how they were delivered from that state through the merits of Jesus Christ, who came down from heaven, was born in a stable and died on a cross to save sinners; how these merits have been applied to their souls in baptism; what promises were made in their name at that time, and how they must keep those promises. Tell them that they must pray to God every day, since it is from God that all good things come; that they should ask Him for what they need, and thank Him for everything he gives them.

"And have we got to teach our children all that?" some parents will say. Yes, you have. "Can't we leave it to the teachers and the priest?" No, you cannot; and it is a great mistake for you to think you can.

The Duty Falls on You in the First Place;

you may get the priest or the catechism teachers to help you; but you must not throw the work entirely on their shoulders. No one else can do the work as well as you can, because no one else has so much authority over your children; no one else has so many chances to teach them. The little lessons that you can give them now and then, even while you are doing your housework, are worth more to them than long instructions given them by others.

"Well," a good many parents will say, "I should be quite willing to instruct my children, if I were able. But I never was very well instructed myself; I don't know enough to instruct them." That is not a good excuse. Suppose a ship goes ashore and becomes a total

wreck, with the loss of the crew, and the captain explains it to the owners by saying "I don't understand navigation." Do you think they would take that for an excuse? Would they not say to him: "You don't understand navigation, and yet you took charge of a ship! Why then you have committed a crime; you are a robber and a murderer!" When you got married, Christian parents, you freely and deliberately took upon yourself all the responsibilities of married life. One of these was the Christian education of such children as God might give you. If you, knowing you were not able to instruct children, took on yourselves the responsibilities of parents, you committed a sin which may cause the loss of your children's souls, and which will certainly cause the loss of your own soul, unless you begin at this very hour to repair the mischief as far as may be in your power.

If you are Ignorant of the Fundamental Truths of the Christian religion, that would be a sin for you even if you never had children; but if your ignorance prevents you from instructing your children, it is a double sin, because it is your bounden duty to instruct them. If you have not the necessary knowledge, you must try to acquire it, and in the meantime take care to send your children to the catechism classes; for, if you cannot instruct them yourselves, you must get some one else to do it. It is because this instruction is often neglected that so many children turn out badly.

To teach the truths of religion to your children is not enough however. It is your duty to train them to habits of piety; it is your duty to mould their characters.

The Character of a Little Child

is like a piece of wax which may be moulded

into any shape; but you must begin to mould it in time. We are told how the elder Tobias, one of those holy men most praised in the Old Testament, trained his son: "From his infancy he taught him to fear God and to abstain from all sin." And, in consequence, the son turned out to be as good a man as his father. The great mistake that parents make is that they do not begin the training of their children soon enough. Some one else has given the wax a shape, and it has begun to get hard, before the parents take hold of it at all. You cannot begin the religious training of your children too soon. You can give them some idea of God and of their duties to God

Before They Can Speak a Word.

They notice things long before they can speak; then let them notice the reverent way in which you speak of God our Father in heaven, and of Jesus Christ our Saviour. Let them notice the terms of praise in which you speak of anything that is right and good, and the signs of abhorrence which you show for everything that is wrong and wicked. Point upwards to heaven, and tell them that there is where good people go to be happy forever; point downwards and tell them of the dreadful fire in which the wicked will burn forever. Show them the crucifix and a picture of the Blessed Virgin, and let them kiss them with reverence. Fold their hands in prayer; teach them to make the sign of the cross; do all this even before they are able to walk; and when they do begin to speak, let the names of Jesus and Mary be the first you teach them, and let the first coherent words they utter be a prayer.

Tobias began the religious training of his son from his infancy; but, as the boy grew old r, the father gave him this instruction: "All the

days of thy life have God in thy mind, and take heed thou never consent to sin, nor transgress the commandments of the Lord thy God." This shows you that, when your children get a little older, you are to explain things more fully to them, telling them, that God made the world and all that is in it, and how we are bound to serve Him. Especially, you should impress upon them that God is everywhere; that He sees everything we do and hears everything we say; that we cannot hide anything from Him. There is nothing better calculated to keep them from sin. Try to stir up in their hearts a personal love for our Lord: teach them to look to the Blessed Virgin as their mother in heaven; teach them to have proper respect for sacred places and things. Try to inspire them with a great hatred of sin, especially of the sins most common to children, lying, stubbornness, bad temper, greediness, laziness.

This does not mean that you are to be continually preaching at them; far from it. A word now and again, a bit of advice; even when they ask you to tell them a story, you can turn this to profit, and take occasion from it to sound the praises of truthful, honest, obedient and good-tempered children. And thus little by little you will sow the good seed in their hearts.

Of course you must see to it, that, as soon as they are able, they

Say their Prayers Morning and Evening.

When children come to the age of seven or eight without knowing even the Lord's Prayer, or the Hail Mary, the parents of those children are certainly guilty of sin. The first lessons in the catechism should be given by yourselves; and even when they are attending the catechism classes, you should examine them; then you should instruct them for confession, and after-

wards bring them to confession. At the same time you must take care not to overburden them with religious practices ; be satisfied with a little, but see that they do that little well. A few prayers well said are better than many prayers badly said.

But just as you cannot teach your children the principles of religion if you do not know them yourselves, so you cannot train them to habits of piety if you are not pious yourselves. It is all important, therefore, that you should

Lead Truly Christian Lives,

not only for your own souls' sake, but for the sake of the souls of your children.

"As the twig is bent the tree will grow," is an old proverb. The same idea is expressed in the words of Holy Scripture : "A young man according to his way, even when he is old, he will not depart from it." It cannot be said that children who have been well brought up never go wrong ; but this can be said, that in the great majority of cases such children come out right in the end. They may have wandered from their father's house, but they know that house well, they love it still in their hearts, and they know the road by which they can return to it. Then when misfortune or disgrace, or sickness comes upon them, they say with the Prodigal of the Gospel : "I will arise and go to my father." So we never despair of a sinner who has received a sound Christian training.

But if ignorance goes hand in hand with bad habits and vices, ignorance of the fundamental principles of religion, ignorance of the most important duties of a Christian, it may well be said that there is no remedy for the evil. It is a hopeless case ; and for this the parents are chiefly responsible, and will be held responsible at the Day of Judgment.

THIRD TALK

About Watching

After having done your duty to your children in the matter of instruction, you must not forget that

They are Children of Adam,

that they have been conceived in sin, and that, although this sin has been washed away in baptism, some of its consequences remain, and one of those consequences is an inclination to evil. It is your duty to counteract this inclination to evil as far as may be in your power, by watching over your children and correcting them.

You must

Watch Over Your Children

to keep them from learning to do wrong; you must correct them to make them stop doing wrong. But as an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure, watchfulness is much better than correction. Yet of all the duties of parents, watching over their children is the one which is most neglected. "I always thought my children were so good," we hear many a poor father or mother say, "and I never knew the difference till it was too late. If I had known it sooner, I would have remedied the evil." No, they did not know it, that is very true. But why did they not know it? Should they not have known it? What pains do they take to get information on the subject? Truly, it is a strange thing, says St. Jerome, addressing himself to parents, that you are the last to know of the bad conduct of your children. Everyone else knows; the whole neighbourhood is talking of it; and you do not even suspect that anything is wrong.

This could not happen if you were even the least bit watchful. It could only happen when you shut your eyes and ears. It is your duty to be watchful, and if you neglect this duty you are guilty of sin. You must study the characters and inclinations of your children; you must keep them out of danger; you must keep an eye on their conduct. You must

Study their Characters and Inclinations,

in order that you may notice the first signs of any evil passion and check it at once. Even a very young child will show whether he is inclined to be bad-tempered, spiteful, proud, obstinate, vain. These are germs of diseases of the soul; if they are allowed to develop, they will kill the soul; but they can easily be destroyed while yet in the germ, and it is the duty of parents to destroy them. Watch your children, then, in order to check their self-will, and make them from the beginning thoroughly obedient. It is a great mistake to pass over everything with little ones, under the pretext that they do not understand what they are doing or saying. It is a great mistake to let these little ones have their own way, in order to keep them in a good humour. They should be made to understand that they will never get anything by crying for it. Once they see that they can get what they want in this way, they will have it, and then instead of obeying you they will make you obey them. If you allow them to have their own way for a time,—until they get more sense, as you say,—you need not be surprised to find their self-will grown so strong that you are not able to bend it. Watch them, then, from the start, in order to develop their good and to check their bad inclinations.

Watch them, in the second place, to

Keep Them out of Danger.

It is quite possible that danger may come to their souls through your own imprudence. It would be a good thing if every father and mother could have a copy of the Mission Book, and read therein their duties on this point. You must be very careful that you do not scandalize your children yourselves, also that they do not scandalize one another. Again, you must be very careful not to allow any one to have charge of them who is not of a thoroughly good character. If children learn bad language and bad conduct from servants, the parents are very often to blame, for you should not employ such servants around your children. You should try to know

Who are your Children's Companions,

and what kind they are, positively forbidding them to keep bad company. Encourage your children to talk freely to you about their studies and amusements, asking them questions, and you will learn a great deal that will be useful to you. They will reveal unconsciously what you want to know, and then you can give them advice. If they are going to school, try to make the acquaintance of their teacher, and inquire how the children behave, what faults the teacher has noticed in them, and so on. The teacher has sometimes better opportunities of observing them than the parents have.

Keep an eye on your children's conduct at all times, as far as possible. Let them never be far away from you if you can help it, and make it your business always to know where they are. Insist that they shall come straight home after school, and then, if they want to go anywhere, let them ask permission. St. John Chrysostom, speaking fifteen hundred years ago, said :

"People take better care of their Cows

and horses than they do of their children!" And is it not true to-day? If you have a horse or a cow, you always know pretty well where they are to be found. Can you say the same of your children? Even at night, when they should all be in the house, many of you do not know where they are. They are running the streets somewhere and learning no good, you may depend on that. This is criminal carelessness on the part of the parents who permit it. The youngsters should never be allowed out after dark, and even with the grown-up ones you should insist that they be in at an early hour. There must be no going to bed and leaving the doors open for them to come in. How any father or mother can go to sleep with an easy conscience, while their boys and girls are out, and they don't know where they are, is something hard to understand. You should never allow your girls to go out at night, without a proper escort, and this applies to going to church as well as to going anywhere else. If your girls are going out to work, you should be very particular as to what kind of people they go with. You should see that they do not neglect their religious duties, and if you find that any attempt is being made to draw them away from their faith, you should put a stop to it immediately.

You should also take

Notice what your Children read.

You should satisfy yourselves that what they read is harmless. And when you are examining a book, try to put yourselves in your children's place. There may be nothing in the book which would do you any harm, and yet it might be dangerous for your children to read it. Some unwise parents think that their children are

all right when they have a book in their hands. "My boys never go out at night; they spend all their time reading." "Reading what?" "O, I don't know. I have no time to read myself. I think they are nice books, with pictures in them." Poor children! It would be better for some of them if they had never learned to read; and sometimes the nice picture books are the worst, the pictures doing more harm than the reading matter.

This duty of watchfulness is very difficult and very painful, but nothing will excuse you from it, and you have the

Grace of the Sacrament of Matrimony

given you for the special purpose of helping you to perform your duties as parents,—a grace which may be renewed as often as you receive worthily the Sacrament of Penance. Father and mother must work together in the education of the children; the husband who throws all the responsibility on his wife is doing very wrong. Whether instructing them, or watching over them, you must share the labor between you. You should not take it for granted that your children are bad, but neither should you take it for granted that they only want wings to make them angels. The best natural dispositions may be completely destroyed by a bad training, and the worst natural dispositions may be corrected. Watch your children, then, Christian fathers and mothers, for it is your duty. And remember that the best watchers are those who can watch without seeming to watch. It is a tiresome task, and it will be a severe strain upon your energies; but it is also a grand and noble task, and great will be your reward if you perform it well.

FOURTH TALK

About Correcting

In spite of all your watchfulness, in spite of all care you take to prevent your children from learning to do wrong, it may happen that

They Will Do Wrong.

And then another duty falls upon you, to use all the authority which God has given you to bring them back into the right way by suitable correction. This means that you are to warn them, to reprove them, and even chastise them, as circumstances require. There is no duty of parents more strongly recommended by Holy Scripture. "He that spareth the rod hateth his son; but he that loveth him correcteth him betimes" (Prov. 13: 24). "Folly is bound up in the heart of a child, and the rod of correction shall drive it away" (Prov. 22: 15). "Withhold not correction from a child; for if thou strike him with a rod, he shall not die. Thou shalt beat him with the rod, and deliver his soul from hell" (Prov. 23: 13). "Bow down his neck while he is young, and beat his sides while he is yet a child, lest he grow stubborn and regard thee not, and so be a sorrow of heart to thee" (Eccles. 30: 12).

It is not an easy matter to give precise rules for the exercise of this duty, yet it is plain that there are certain qualities which correction should have, and certain faults which it should avoid. In the first place it should be given at the proper time and in the proper manner. The words of Ecclesiasticus indicate very clearly that it should begin early. It is a great mistake to suppose that a young child is never to be corrected, that everything may be passed over until

such a time as it knows better and has better sense.

The Word of God

gives you to understand that you must be prepared sometimes to restrain the natural tenderness which would prevent you from being severe with your children; you must sometimes shut your ears to the sound of their weeping; you must love them wisely, not with that blind, excessive love which thinks only of pleasing them. Observe the reason given by the Word of God for beating his sides while he is yet a child,—

Lest He Grow Stubborn and Regard Thee Not.

While your children are young, you do not correct them, because, you say, they are too small; bye and bye you will say you cannot control them because they are too big. When they are young, you do not want to correct them; when they are old, you can not do it. You can make a tender twig take any shape you like; but when it has become a tree, it will keep the shape in which it has grown up. So it is with children; they must be brought under control and not allowed to do as they like on the plea that they will get better sense as they grow up. Of course the judgment ripens with age, but bad habits also grow; little by little they get the better of the judgment, and end by making it their slave. Neglect to correct your children when they are young, and the time will come when you will want to exercise your authority over them, but you will not be able to do so. You will not scold them; they will laugh at you. You will fly in a violent passion with them; they will rebel; perhaps they will even raise their hand against you. And you will end by being afraid of them.

Accustom your children, then, from their earliest years to

Respect Your Commands.

Never allow them to disobey you, not even in the smallest matter. Be prudent and reasonable in giving your commands, but once they are given, insist that they shall be obeyed. If the first command is about a trifling matter, you need not have given it; but since you have given it, you must make your children obey it. And if they get the habit of obeying you in small things, they are not likely to disobey you in more important things. What a pitiful state of affairs when we see parents begging their children to do something, or perhaps even offering them a reward if they will do it! If you do this, you are encouraging disobedience, putting a premium on it, in fact, since you let your children see that by disobeying you they will gain something. Either you must never enter into a contest with your children, or you must win that contest. If you allow yourselves to be conquered even once, it is all over with your authority.

So much for the time when you are to correct your children. As to the manner, it

Must be Done Judiciously.

Correction is a remedy, a medicine. Now, medicines are not to be used continually, and without measure; they are to be given at certain times and in certain doses, just so much and no more. You must take care not to give this medicine too often; for, if you do, it may do more harm than good. If you are continually dinning your children's ears with a scolding voice, they will get accustomed to it as they do to the ticking of a clock; they will not hear you at all. There are many little childish faults which are not sins, and these you may pass over very often without seeming to notice them. There are others which are mean rather than wicked, and

these you may be able to shame them out of. In some other cases a look may be enough, or a tone of the voice or a word of warning. But to give them long and severe lectures, worse still, blows, for the most trifling faults, is as ridiculous, to say the least, as

Killing Flies with a Hammer,

or shooting sparrows with a rifle.

You must make a distinction between one fault and another, between the faults which arise merely from levity and those which come from malice. The more greivous the fault, the more severe should be the correction. And yet there are many parents who will get into a rage with their children on account of an accident, a pane of glass broken, for instance, or a jacket torn. And perhaps these same parents will pass over lying, disobedience, cursing or immodest language in their children with the mildest kind of a reproof, or it may be without any reproof at all. Now, the children know very well, in spite of all your scolding, that a broken pane of glass and a torn jacket are not very important matters. And surely they must think that, in your estimation at least, lying, disobedience, cursing and immodest language are less important still.

But the slight correction which will do for a docile child will not be enough for a headstrong one. Some children are easily led to do right ; others must be driven. You must study the characters and dispositions of your children, in order to know how you should deal with them.

The faults committed by parents in performing the duty of correction may be set down under three heads : excessive mildness ; excessive severity ; a combination of the two.

Excessive Mildness and Indulgence

is the fault of those of you who are so passion-

ately fond of your children that you cannot bear to cause them the least bit of pain or sorrow. You are so afraid of causing them this sorrow by correcting their faults, that you overlook their faults, you leave them unpunished, or perhaps you even go so far as to laugh at their faults. Often we hear a child give a saucy answer to his father or mother, and the father or mother laugh at it as if it were a joke. If the boy is headstrong and disobedient, if he is quarrelsome with his young companions, and impudent to older people, his parents pass over all this; perhaps they are even proud of it, for it shows that the lad has a high spirit. Yes, he has the kind of high spirit which makes a splendid street rowdy, the kind of high spirit which may cause him to end his days in the penitentiary or on the scaffold, and which is pretty sure to lose him his soul. Not one in a hundred murders is committed in cold blood. Ninety-nine out of a hundred are due to bad temper; bad temper which the murderer's parents would not check when he was a child, because it was only high spirit. Many a good man has been driven to ruin, to drink, perhaps even to infidelity, by the tongue of a scolding wife. And she first learned to use her tongue in this fashion when she was a young girl. Her father and mother never taught her to control her temper; no, they were proud of her high spirit. What foolish parents! And do you think your children will love you better because you treat them in this criminally indulgent fashion? Not a bit of it. They will despise you. A man was once asked why he had severely chastised his son Jack, of whom he was so fond. His answer was: "Jack would think me a fool if I didn't." A boy knows very well when he ought to get a whipping, and if he doesn't get it,

he will stick his tongue into his cheek, and say to himself: "I've got the old man on a string!" Instead of showing your love for your children by not correcting them, you are proving yourselves their deadliest enemies. You are ruining them for this life, and for the next, and you are preparing endless misery for yourselves. "A horse not broken becometh stubborn; and a child left to himself will become headstrong. Give thy son his way, and he shall make thee afraid; play with him, and he shall make thee sorrowful; Give him not liberty in his youth, and wink not at his devices. Bow down his neck while he is young, and beat his sides while he is a child, lest he grow stubborn and regard thee not, and so be a sorrow of heart to thee" (Ecclesiasticus 30: 8-12).

FIFTH TALK

Manner of Correcting

Excessive mildness often makes parents neglect the duty of correcting their children altogether; or they perform the duty, if at all, in a weak, irresolute, half-hearted fashion.

Heli, the High Priest,

in the First Book of Kings, was a parent of this sort. He was old and infirm; his two sons, who officiated for him in the temple, were bad men who scandalized the people. This came to the father's ears, and he administered a gentle reproof: "Why do you this kind of things which I hear, very wicked things, from all the people? Do not so, my sons, for it is no good report I hear." But he went no further; he did not use his authority as their father and as a high-

priest to correct them and put a stop to their disorders. Therefore the Lord fortold him : " I will judge his house forever for iniquity because he knew that his sons did wickedly, and did not chastise them." Which was fulfilled by all manner of afflictions falling upon this family. Now the weakness of certain parents is just like that of Heli. When the evil needs to be dealt with in the severest manner, they employ the mildest measures ; they merely give a bit of good advice, a slight rebuke or a slight chastisement. Such measures may do when your children commit some faults of very little consequence ; but when the faults are grave and repeated, warnings will not do ; you must take more active measures ; you must use all the authority which God has given you. Be mild and just with your children, but be also firm and energetic enough to make yourselves feared and respected. Your children will not love you any the less for it, and they will esteem you a great deal the more.

But while avoiding one excess, you must take care not to fall into another which is even more grievous and deplorable, that is the

Excess of Severity.

There are parents so bad tempered that they will tolerate nothing. They cannot say a single kind word ; they are always scolding or threatening, and their hands are ever ready to strike. There are brutal parents, who, even when they punish with good reason, punish far too severely. Such harshness as this is altogether unnatural. God has implanted in all creatures a love and tenderness towards their young ; and He expects his rational creatures not to root out this affection from their hearts, but to give it a proper direction. To act in direct opposition to

this is to act against nature itself, and must have very serious consequences. It greatly diminishes that affection and regard which children have by nature implanted in them toward their parents; for however strong this may be, if they meet with nothing from their parents but harshness and brutality, this will necessarily cool their love towards them. It has the worst effects upon the children themselves; it breaks their spirit, discourages them from all good, renders all advice useless to them, and makes them leave their parents at the first opportunity, and expose themselves in the cruel world to misery and perdition. To prevent this, parents should show a

Love and Tenderness for their Children,

never get in a passion with them, but teach them the necessary obedience with all mildness as well as with all firmness, and convince them that correction is given them only for their real good. The Word of God makes great difference between necessary discipline and harshness: "Father, provoke not your children to indignation, lest they be discouraged," says St. Paul. And again, "Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and correction of the Lord." Your correction ought to be the correction of the Lord, that is to say, it should be animated and directed by a real desire of your children's salvation. It should not be the correction of the devil, inspired by brutal passion which seeks only to ill-treat those who have given offence. If, when you are correcting your children, you really have nothing else in view except their good, you will easily keep within proper bounds, and go no further than is necessary. And, if circumstances require that the punishment should be rigorous, you will let them see that though you are

displeased with them, you love them still. In this way you will dispose your children to receive correction with advantage, since on the one hand they know perfectly well that they have done wrong, and on the other they will be persuaded that if you chastise them, it is with regret and only for their good.

But in order that your children may be persuaded that the severity which you show them at times comes from your love for them, you must

Treat Them Properly in Every Other Respect.

You must show that you are pleased with them when they are obedient and respectful to you; you must animate and encourage them when they are doing right; you must give them little rewards now and then for their good conduct. Above all, you must not leave them in want of what is really necessary for them. If you never display your authority except in scolding, threatening and beating them; if you pay no attention to them except when they displease you; if you keep them down like slaves; if you leave them without clothes to wear, while you are wasting your earnings or are too lazy to work; if you neglect your children in this way, you will not win their affection, and without their affection, your correction will do them no good, but make them grow worse through stubbornness and contempt. You can do anything with your children if they really love you. But remember that

Love Begets Love.

If you want to win the love of your children, show them that you really love them, not by tolerating what shouldn't be tolerated, but by the thousand little acts of kindness which good parents find it so easy to perform.

Excessive mildness is one fault; excessive severity another; and strange to say, we often

find the two in the same person. There are parents, who, in dealing with their children, follow no other rule than the good or bad humor they happen to be in. One day they will turn the house upside down for nothing at all; another day they will laugh at things which they ought to punish severely. Sometimes they will pass in the same hour from caresses to blows and from blows to caresses. This is folly, and worse than folly. What authority can you acquire over your children if you act in this way? The manner of rearing children is not a thing to be decided by the humor you happen to be in:

It must be regular and systematic.

You must have control over yourselves; you must keep your minds well-balanced, if you want to win the respect of your children. We see some parents who can never manage their children either by threats or by tenderness; while others have only to give a sign, a word, a look, and they are obeyed. The reason of this difference is that the latter class of parents are always even-tempered, never punishing to-day what they laughed at yesterday; they are always gentle yet always firm; they do not command their children by fits and starts; they govern them in a steady regular fashion. The former class of parents have not learned how to govern themselves; how then can they expect to govern their children?

Correction is the Most Difficult Part of Education.

To fulfil this duty properly you need a great deal of discretion and a great deal of prudence; prudence to distinguish one case from another; prudence to choose the most favorable time and circumstances; prudence to keep within certain limits; so as not to make your children despise

you for your indulgence or hate you for your severity. It is not enough that parents should be good and pious, unless they are prudent as well. There are many good and pious persons who have not a grain of prudence; and therefore there are many good and pious parents who do not know the first thing about bringing up children. The world is surprised to see the children of such good parents turn out so bad; yet there is nothing surprising about it, for goodness will not bring up children properly unless there is prudence with it. On the other hand, we see parents who are not particularly pious succeed very well in bringing up their children; and the reason is because they have good judgment and a great deal of prudence.

“But how are we to get this prudence, if we do not possess it naturally?” you will ask. In the first place you should always act with a pure intention, for the glory of God and the good of your children’s souls; you should never act hastily, but only after reflection; you should take the advice of others, and not be too much attached to your own opinion. But above all, you should

Pray Earnestly and Fervently

to the Father of light, that He give you the light of His Holy Spirit, that He give you the wisdom you need. Pray with confidence, and be sure that God who has called you to the task of bringing up children will not refuse the grace which you need for the performance of that task.

SIXTH TALK

Different Punishments

When speaking of the

Use of the Rod

we mean to signify the various forms of corporal

punishment which the prudence of ages has found to be useful in dealing with children. The particular form which commended itself to the "Modern Mother" whose vagaries first suggested our publishing these "Talks," is the one which we like least, viz., solitary confinement. To lock a child up in a room alone for several hours seems to us a punishment fraught with danger. The modified form of this punishment described by Kipling in his "Wee Willie Winkie,"—

A Study of Boy Life

as admirable as his "Stalky" stories are detestable,—seems to present some advantages, however. "Wee Willie" was the little son of an English officer in India, and loved the ways of the army. To keep him in order, his mother made him a sort of military uniform, on which she sewed good conduct stripes according as he merited them, and these were removed again for bad behaviour. If he did something deserving of severer punishment, he was put under "arrest" and obliged to give his "parole" that he would not go beyond certain bounds until released. This is not practicable, of course, for any of our parents, but Mr. Kipling very probably drew the picture from life, and it shows how a wisely loving mother may devise modes of correction to fit the character of her children. Confinement cannot do any harm if accompanied by a task, as is the custom in boarding-schools, where idle or wayward pupils are deprived of part of their holiday and given so many pages of a book to copy out. This has the special advantage of making the punishment fit the offence. Another form of correction which has this great merit is the old-fashioned custom of sending to bed without any supper a child who has been guilty of gluttony, has wantonly wast-

ed good food, has stolen sweetmeats, etc., and has continued to do these things after repeated warnings. Some parents say they cannot bear to lay a hand on their children unless they lash themselves into a rage. This is precisely the time when you should not inflict the punishment of whipping at all for you are likely to do it too severely, and your children will think that you are merely working off your bad temper at their expense. But surely the depriving of the child of some pleasure you intended to give it, the sending of an unruly boy supperless to bed, can be carried out without any feeling of anger.

Another mistake made through want of prudence is the showing of

Partiality Towards Some Children.

Children differ from one another in character and disposition as they do in looks; and it is quite natural that you should like some of your children better than others because of their more agreeable qualities. This feeling of preference is not a sin of itself; nevertheless, you must keep it down and not allow it to have any influence with you in your outward government of your children; for it would be a sin of injustice, and a great sin, to *show* more favour to one than to another simply because one has greater natural gifts than another. Partiality is bad on every side,—bad for those to whom you show favor, because on the one hand you make them disliked by those who are less favoured; and on the other hand you spoil them, they become selfish and stubborn, they disobey you readily because they know your foolish fondness will overlook anything they may do. In the end it is more than likely that they will repay you for this foolish fondness by treating you with neglect or even with harshness. Again, the

partiality which you show to some of your children is very bad for the others ; for, when they find themselves neglected and despised, their natural love for you will begin to grow cool ; when they are corrected by you even with good reason, they will put it all down to your dislike for them ; and they will have feelings of jealousy, envy, even hatred for those of their brothers and sisters whom you like best. And so your partiality is laying the foundation for

Discord and Disunion

which never have an end.

But, you will ask, is it not right to show special favour to those who deserve it? Yes, but only to those who really deserve it. And children do not deserve special favour because they happen to be prettier or cleverer than their brothers and sisters. You may show special favour to good children, for then the others will see that they have only to be good to be treated with equal favour ; but you should never show any special favour to cleverness or good looks, because then the others will see themselves shut out from your favour without any fault of their own, and they will have bitter feelings towards the favored ones and towards you, their parents. Even when the preference is a just one, you must be careful not to show it in too noticeable a manner. Herein, also, if prudence is not used, the consequences may be serious. We have an example of this in the

History of Jacob and His Sons

as told in the Old Testament. Jacob loved Joseph much better than the others, and with good reason. But he showed this preference very indiscreetly, by giving him finer clothes than the others ; and this made Joseph's brothers so bitterly jealous that they sold him for a slave, and made their father believe he had been

killed by a wild beast. You should most earnestly desire to have all your children love you, and to have them good friends with one another. And you cannot have this if you show partiality.

Another very important thing is that

Father and Mother Should Perfectly Agree

in the government of their family ; for if they do not, it will be impossible to bring up the children well. If the father thinks the mother is too soft and easy with the children ; if the mother thinks the father is too hard and severe ; if you disagree between yourselves as to what ought to be done, and above all, if you are so imprudent as to disagree before your children, —what is the result? The result is that you are despised by your children, and that correction is made impossible, since the children have reason to believe that one of you will protect them when the other wishes to punish them. It is therefore of the very greatest importance that both parents should be perfectly agreed in the education of their children. Or if you sometimes disagree, discuss the matter in secret until you have come to an agreement, but never let the children even suspect that there has been any disagreement at all. Otherwise, the words of our Saviour will be surely fulfilled: "Every kingdom divided against itself shall be made desolate."

SEVENTH TALK

Teaching by Example

It is not enough for you to instruct, to watch over, and to correct your children ; you must also

Give Them Good Example.

It is very seldom, of course, that we find parents

so wicked as to teach evil to their children directly. In general, no doubt, you are eloquent in praise of virtue and religion, and desirous of persuading your children that you are really attached to these things. This is all very good. But what will the children think, if they see your actions give the lie to your words? Which are they more likely to follow, your teaching or your example. Do you not know that example is much more powerful than precept? And if this be true of all example, how much more is it true of the example given by parents, whom the children see so constantly, whom they look up to, whom they consider the best models in the world for them to follow in their conduct. Your lives are constantly before your children's eyes, and

Your Conduct is a Law

unto them. They feel perfectly justified in doing what they see you do. This is the reason why it ordinarily happens that as the parents are, so are the children.

Since your example has so great an influence upon the conduct of your children, you should understand the importance and the necessity of having that influence a good one. Never an improper word or gesture should escape you before them ;

Your Life Should be a Mirror of Virtue

and of good Christian conduct. Then your instruction and your correction will have some effect, being supported by your example. But how can you instruct or correct when your conduct contradicts your words? You may tell your children : " Don't do as I do, but do as I say ;" but if you tell them this, you are simply

Wasting Your Breath.

It is no use for you to tell your children that they

must not neglect their prayers, if they see you get up and begin your work in the morning without bending a knee to God. No use for you to tell them to go to Mass on Sundays, if they see you staying at home without any good reason. No use for you to send them to Confession, if you never or very seldom go yourselves. No use for you to tell them to be truthful, if they hear you telling lies. No use for you to tell them to be honest, if they hear you boasting of how you have cheated your neighbour. No use for you to tell them they must love their neighbour, if they see you quarrelling or hear you talking spitefully or slanderously about people you don't like. No use for you to tell them not to curse, nor to use impure language, if they hear you cursing whenever anything vexes you, if they hear you using impure language yourselves or laughing at others who use it. Sad to say, this is the way many parents bring up their children, giving them very good instructions and very bad example. It would be better, far better, for such children if they were brought up in a foundling asylum, and never knew the home where they learn to curse before they learn the Lord's Prayer, and where they have the devil's joke-book by heart before they know one lesson in the Catechism.

These are extreme cases, of course, but there are many others wherein parents are guilty of grievous sin in giving bad example to their children. It is a matter for long and

Careful Examination of Conscience

on the part of every father and mother. Mild and gentle as our Saviour usually was when dealing with sinners, the words He used about scandal-givers, and especially about those who give scandal to little children, should make us tremble ;

“Whosoever shall scandalize one of these little ones that believe in me, it were better for him if a millstone were hanged about his neck and he were cast into the sea.”

And if this be true of any scandal giver, with how much greater force does it not apply to fathers and mothers whom God has made the natural guardians and protectors of these little ones! He placed them under your care, that you might teach them to know and serve Him here on earth, and be happy with Him forever in heaven. But if you give them bad example, you are teaching them to know and serve the the devil here on earth, with the inevitable result, unless they are rescued by a special grace of God, that they will share with the devil the torments of the damned for all eternity. And can it be possible that the parents who are responsible for such a horrible result will be saved themselves? “If any man have not care of his own, and especially of those of his house, he hath denied the faith and is worse than an infidel,” says St. Paul. And do you believe that the infidel will be condemned to everlasting fire, and they that are worse than infidels allowed to enter into the joys of the Lord?

Now, if we trace the

Unfitness for Parental Duties

to its source, we shall find that it arises very largely from hasty and ill-considered marriages, from young people rushing into matrimony who know nothing and care nothing about children, having always regarded them as little nuisances or objects to be teased. They come to have children of their own, and they love them passionately, but they do not understand them: perhaps they are too selfish to bother with them, for passionate fondness and intense selfishness are often found together. And so they fail to

bring up their children well. Why is it that successful school teachers make such wise fathers and mothers? Because they understood child nature; they have grown to like children and to take an interest in them. When they come to have children or their own, they begin to study them as they used to do in school; they watch them as the skilful gardener watches the growth of a new plant, which is unknown to him but resembles some others that he does know; they love their children passionately, but rationally as well; and they know that they must use gentleness, firmness and untiring patience in dealing with them. These parents may be naturally selfish, too; but they have grown accustomed to taking an interest in the welfare of others, and working for others goes a long way to destroy selfishness. So these parents are willing to take more trouble and to make more sacrifices for their children than other parents who have never had the same training.

Schoolteaching, then, is one of the best preparations for the duties of parents, but very few can have this preparation. Yet any one may strive to acquire similar qualifications in other ways. We may try to

Take an Interest in the Children

we see around us, even though they are not under our care; we may try to study their characters, comparing one with another and noticing how they differ. If they come within our reach, we may try to gain an influence over them and use it for their good. Especially this may and should be done by young men and women when they have little brothers and sisters. A grown-up son or daughter ought to be of great assistance to their father and mother in looking after the little ones; and at the same time they will be laying up for themselves a

fund of experience on which to draw later on when God calls them to be heads of families. Young men and women should try to take an interest in children, to understand them and sympathize with them. After the grace of God, nothing is a more powerful factor for good in the rearing of children than to have an intelligent interest in them and sympathy with them. And without this the grace of God is powerless, for God wishes His grace to do its work through human instruments.

Young men and women should try to fit themselves for the work of education, work which includes

Instruction, Watchfulness, Correction and Good Example.

As to you on whom the duty has fallen of performing this work, you must labor to perform it as though everything depended on yourselves alone, and at the same time, you must pray as though nothing at all depended on you. Ask God to show you what you ought to do, and then to give you the grace to do it. Ask him to prepare your children's hearts, that they may be ready to receive the good seed you are going to plant therein. Employ the intercession of the Blessed Virgin and St. Joseph, those

Models for all Parents;

employ the intercession of the guardian angels and the patron saints of your children. Having done all this, having worked and having prayed, your mind may be at ease. Not that your children are sure to turn out well: Abraham had an Ishmael, Isaac, an Esau, and nearly all Jacob's sons were bad. But having done your best, both by your own efforts and by prayer, you need not worry as to whether the result shall be a success or a failure. God does not

require that you shall succeed; He simply requires that you shall do your duty. And if you have done your duty, whether you succeed or fail, your reward will be the same. "Every man shall receive his own reward according to his labour," says St. Paul,—not according to his success, remember, but according to his labour.

EIGHTH TALK

The Sense of Reverence

One of the most precious gifts which parents can bestow upon their children is a

Sense of Reverence.

If the amount of reverence now in the world were reduced, the amount of sin, suffering, misery, and death would at once visibly increase. Life and happiness are closely connected with reverence for holy persons and holy things. The foundation of this virtue is laid when children can learn to

Honor their Parents.

How unfortunate are the children whose parents have little in them that is worthy of reverence. And even when the parents are good, or at least try to be good, they may fail to lay the foundation of reverence in their children. When children are allowed to do as they please, or when they are got to obey only by coaxing and coddling, they may grow up so full of selfishness that there is no room for a sense of reverence in them. The Fourth Commandment does not merely say to children: *Obey* your parents. Obedience is necessary, but not enough. The Commandment says: *Honour* thy father and thy mother. To honour is to fear and love and respect as well as to obey. It is the child's first exercise in the virtue of reverence. It is a

preparation for a life of reverential fear of God. He tells us in Holy Scripture that the practice of the honour due to parents is a condition of long and happy life in this world. He does not say that everyone who fulfills this condition will have a long life, because there are other necessary conditions; but He does imply that the child who has no reverence for parents is on the road to misery and untimely death. This is a

Law of Nature.

To avoid the things that make for misery and an untimely death, it is not enough to know what these things are. We also need to have in us a cultivated feeling of hatred for such things, to counteract the attraction which they have. This attraction will blind us to the remote consequences of bad conduct, if we have no aversion for such conduct in itself. Now, a sense of reverence gives this feeling of aversion which we need in order to avoid the things that lead to misery and untimely death. It is this sense of reverence which St. Paul seeks to cultivate in the Corinthians as a safeguard against bad conduct; when he says: "Know you not that you are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? But if any man violate the temple of God, him shall God destroy: for the temple of God is holy, which you are." This reverence would be a great virtue and a great duty even if it had not this bearing on moral conduct. It is a religious duty in any case. But it has, in addition, the great value of a

Safeguard against Bad Ways.

And the beginning of it in the child is the practice of the honor due to its parents. The parents who do not insist in receiving the honour due them from their children are guilty of a very great injustice to their children. The children who do not learn to revere their parents will

scarcely learn to revere God, and are thus unprotected and exposed to the wickedness of the world and the snares of the devil. And when trouble of mind and weakness of body follow, as they so often do, that is a natural working out of sin against this law: "Honour thy father and thy mother, that it may be well with thee, and that thou mayest be long-lived upon the earth." But the primitive reverence of the child for its parents needs to be engrafted on to reverence for God at a tender age; else it will not grow. Hence the great usefulness of family prayer, and the need of

Conducting it with Reverence.

If the prayer is said in a hurried way, as if in haste to get to the end of it, it will have a bad effect on the future lives of the children. Parents should speak of holy persons and holy things in a reverent way. The habit of cursing and swearing kills the sense of reverence. So does immodest talk, or habitual talk about the faults of neighbors. When visitors are being entertained, it is sometimes advisable to send the children to a separate room. A reverent use of such words as *holy* and *blessed* has a good effect. A mother who says: "Children, it is time for the *Holy Rosary*," teaches reverence by using that word *holy*. And the father who speaks of the *Holy Sacrifice of the Mass*, teaches reverence. Indeed, the Holy Mass with Holy Communion is God's own way of maintaining a sense of reverence in the world. Millions and millions of lives have been made longer and happier even in this world by the saving sense of reverence which comes from assisting piously at the Holy Sacrifice and from receiving worthily the Blessed Eucharist. "Except you eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink His blood, you shall not

have life in you." The life of grace which depends on this food is a higher life, but it is not separate life. It is a human life sanctified and strengthened. Without this strengthening addition our human nature droops and gets hopelessly entangled in worldly desires. "Godliness is profitable to all things, having the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come." What the sun in the sky is to the vegetable world, the Holy Sacrifice is to human society. It sustains life. It radiates reverence. Its rays fall on millions who know it not. It is the great public Act of Adoration. But the sun does not restore life to a dead plant, nor does the Holy Sacrifice create reverence in one who has it not. To such a person the Mass seems long and tedious, and Heaven would be a place of torture. The Holy Sacrifice sustains, nourishes, and develops a sense of reverence. It does not create it. Reverence must begin in the little child. The family is

God's School for Teaching

the alphabet of reverence. St. John says: "He that loveth not his brother, whom he seeth, how can he love God whom he seeth not?" Much more, if the child revere not the father on earth, how can he revere the Father in Heaven? And in family worship the two kinds of reverence unite and mutually strengthen each other. It is an act of filial reverence to be at home at the hour of family prayer, and an act of reverence for God to be attentive during the prayer. The union of the two is the seed of a strong and beautiful Christian character.

NINTH TALK

The Catholic Character.

What we should care to form and preserve in ourselves and in our children is the

Catholic Character,

a character as distinct as it is beautiful, and which is entirely built upon the foundations of the Catholic faith. By this Catholic character, remember, I do not in the least mean the character of a recluse or a devotee. You see some of its very finest examples in the world and in those filling worldly positions. Take, for instance, Blessed Thomas More while he remained the

Chancellor of the Realm.

Witness his loyalty to his sovereign, yet openly putting God first on all occasions; his sterling integrity; his conscientious fulfilment of all the duties of his state of life. No wonder when God called him higher to be a confessor and martyr, he was so ready, so happy, to obey the call.

This Christian character consists in (1)

Fidelity to Duty,

giving to all their due: to God, to others, and to ourselves; (2)

Freedom from Human Respect,

readiness to confess the truth, to practice religion openly; (3)

Love of the Poor,

self-denying alms-deeds, readiness to help others; and (4)

Good Habits.

It is wonderful how large a share in the Christian character is owing to good habits. It is quite a distinctive feature, contrasting with the fits and starts and whims and moods—good

moods and bad moods, pious moods and worldly moods, —all things by turns and nothing for long, which we see in the unformed character. I mean good habits stuck to: morning and night prayers; the regular frequentation of the Sacraments; the daily Mass; orderly conduct. We heard only yesterday of a gentleman who regularly walked eight miles on a week-day to hear Mass. It was his habit, and he never broke it.

And what I want to impress on you is the importance of this

Power of Habit.

Habit is the repeated act, the adherence to the act, and that by way of submission to some law. A person without habits is like a ship without sails and without a rudder; it gets along somehow, but it is quite a question which way it goes. There is something in a habit which is sanctifying, because strengthening. A very small thing persevered in has more valuable results than a much greater thing done intermittently. For example, suppose the first day of Lent we propose to read every day a chapter of "The Following of Christ," or to practice some trifling definite mortification at meals, or to perform some little devotion in honour of the Sacred Passion; it will do us more good to persevere in these resolutions than if we were once or twice, when the notion took us, to fast on bread and water.

It would do us good this way. We could not keep up any little practice perseveringly without its often having to encounter a

Resistance of Nature.

We like to do it to-day and perhaps to-morrow; but next day, it may be, we forget; or just at the time when we should be doing it we want, or some one else wants us, to do something else; and the effort we make over ourselves not to be

put out or to turn out of the way is an effort that strengthens, and is, in fact, virtue. And its indirect effect will be to put muscle and vigor into our whole system ; so that we shall be more disposed, more vigilant, to command ourselves in other ways, and attend to other matters of virtue ; whereas the fits-and-starts kind of piety gains no sort of control. For the same reason, I have no hesitation in saying that, with regard to the Sacraments, the regular frequentation of them at fixed times is infinitely more precious than going more frequently but irregularly.

Good Habits Require an Effort

to form ; bad habits are very easily formed, because they go with the stream. What we call bad habits is generally indulgence of some part of our unrestrained nature ; idle habits, for instance, spring from the sloth of our nature, which hates trouble and can not bring itself to face a difficulty with a strong will. For the most part, good habits call for *resistance*. On this capacity for resistance everything depends.

This is just one reason why you are checked and restrained in a thousand little things that are not sins ; and why you think it so tiresome to be told constantly *not* to do certain things which spring from unrestrained nature. Saint Ignatius calls them *inordinatio*, and he says this want of restraint is one of the roots of sin.

Lent is a good time to take all these imperfections in hand. We should try and do our best during these holy days for ourselves and one another. Do not undertake too much, but try to adhere steadily to a few things, with the thought of our Dear Lord and desire to please Him constantly in your hearts. Kindness to others for His sake goes straight to the Heart of Jesus.

Church Supplies

A Full Selection of Religious Literature — Works of Faber, Gibbons and Benson, Butler's "Lives of the Saints," "History of the Catholic Church in Western Canada," by Father Morice, O.M.I. Rosaries, Medals, Medallions, Statues, Pictures and Picture Frames, Scapulars, Candlesticks, Holy Water Fonts, Crucifixes, Prayer Books, Bibles, Sanctuary Oil, Incense, Charcoal, Candles,
————— &c., &c. —————

Special Attention Given to Mail Orders

LA BELLE STATIONERY AND CHURCH SUPPLY HOUSE

609 Richards St.

Vancouver, B. C.

WRITE FOR PARTICULARS

